



The Old Collyerians' Association

Autumn 2015

President's message

Well, as we all get older, time seems to pass by ever faster and it seems only the other week that I was penning my Spring message. It is now September and our thoughts turn to the Annual Dinner. But before I say farewell there are four items of news on which I would like to comment :

1. The Summer Reunion at Denbies.

Another successful event - please see below - arranged and executed with his normal efficiency by Derek Sturt. My regret was that I was unable to attend due to my own old age: I had another commitment which I had forgotten! Anyway I understand all those members that attended enjoyed the day.

2. Founders Day and Leavers Recital - 25th June.

This was held at St Mary's Church, albeit in a very different format from my time at Collyer's. Indeed I can recall that as a Prefect Founders Day was really the only day in the year that we would 'don' our caps with their yellow tassels. The interesting fact is that I still have that cap albeit it is now showing its age. This evening in June was both interesting and memorable and it is quite evident Collyer's has some excellent musicians.

3. Collyers' A-level Results.

These came out in August and the headline in the *West Sussex County Times* was "Students excel with a strong set (of results)". The A-level pass rate

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was 98% with over 54% achievement in grades A*/B. At AS (the first year results for students) the pass rate was 91%. Clearly these are an excellent set of results. Congratulations to go Sally Bromley and her excellent team.

4. *Winter Reunion : Saturday 28th November.*

In my position as Treasurer I am very pleased to report that some members have already paid for their places at this years event. And please note that members of the 1955 Hive - yes 60 years ago - will receive a free bottle of wine which is very kindly being supplied by one of our former Presidents. That said I would have thought members of the Hive would be a pious lot not taken to drinking and general debauchery. We will see! Additionally we will be celebrating the final

intake back in 1975 of the old grammar school pupils. I know young Mister Ian Wilson and the equally young Mister Chris Manville are keen to bring along as many pupils from that year as possible. Good luck gentlemen in your endeavours.

Finally it has been a great honour to have been your President for the past year and rest assured I will remain part of the 'team' having agreed to pick up the mantle of your Treasurer a few years ago. However my colleagues on the committee have been very evasive about the length of my term as Treasurer! As the saying goes "Old Bankers never die, they just loose interest"

Best wishes,

*Stewart Mackman
1971-1976*

Jottings

The HIVE

This issue marks the 50th anniversary of the first 'Hive', something that we hope to celebrate at the forthcoming Winter Reunion dinner. But why Hive? We understood it may have been an abbreviation of 'half five', but surely an analogy to busy bees could be more appropriate? Does anybody know the true derivation of the name? Additionally, I have heard that the Hive was briefly revived in the final grammar school years - can anybody confirm this?. And I have heard rumours that there was, for a time, the opposite to the Hive, a 'bottom' form, known as the 'Remove' - surely not at Collyer's?

Events at Collyer's

Past President James Pullen reported on two events at Collyer's in 2014, which unfortunately were omitted from the last Newsletter due to pressure on space. At least the first of these events will quite likely be repeated in 2015.

Christmas Concert: There was good sweet singing in the choir and congregation at Collyer's Christmas concert, held in St Mary's Parish Church, Horsham, on Thursday 11 December 2014. The concert, which was very well attended, was introduced with a welcome and prayer by the Vicar, Canon Guy Bridgewater. The concert opened with the singing of Once in Royal David's City and was followed by readings and performances by the talented students and further carols for the congregation to join in. Collyer's Big Band gave a rousing performance directed by Mike Lavelle and

included some wonderful vocals by student Madeleine Snowdon. The concert closed with the singing of 'O Come all ye Faithful' and a blessing by the Vicar. A most enjoyable evening was rounded off with mulled wine and mince pies. There was a retiring collection in aid of Collyer's Co-operative Tanzanian project and we all went home thinking "It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas".

In Memoriam: To commemorate the centenary of the First World War Collyer's held a special act of remembrance at 11am on 11 November 2014. This was a very moving ceremony held in the quadrangle and was attended by the Principal of the College, staff, Dr Skipp (a governor), OCA members Pullen, Sturt and Windwood and about 1,000 students. The Last Post was performed with great sensitivity by student Daniel Dickson. We then moved into the Memorial Hall where the Principal read a tribute to the fallen, including the names of Old Collyerians and masters who had given their lives during the Great War of 1914-1918. Two students closed the ceremony by placing wreaths on the memorial boards.

Endurance and Sacrifice

Our Secretary, Andrew Campbell, tells us that he has recently heard from fellow OC Dave Ellis about a forthcoming book from Horsham area author, Gary Cooper. 'Endurance and Sacrifice, Horsham, 1939-45' contains about 880 pages and over 400 photographs.

Part one relates to those who were children living at the time of WW2, and part two records the experiences of those in military service as well as those who became casualties.

One remarkable offshoot of Gary's investigations is that 42 names will be added to the Horsham war memorial in time for the Remembrance Day observances for this year. He had previously managed to achieve a similar result in connection with the First World War.) It is anticipated that this new book will be available from Horsham Museum from mid-December.

One entry refers to Raymond Sydney Smith Waters, the youngest known Horsham war casualty and the only civilian to be recorded on the Horsham War Memorial. Raymond was killed in an air raid on Friday 29 November 1940, aged 14. He attended Collyer's Grammar School.

Raymond Waters was born on 22 October, 1926, the son of Bert Smith Waters and his wife, Inez Alice, who ran a small radio repair business from their home at 12, Orchard Road, Horsham.

Raymond was killed when a lone German aircraft bombed Orchard Road. There was no early warning of any aircraft approaching the town and Raymond died instantaneously while asleep in bed at home.

Bert and Inez Waters survived the Orchard Road bombing, as did their other son, Anthony Paul, born in 1931, and who also attended Collyer's. Bert died in March, 1979, his death being registered in the Worthing District where, it is believed, he (with his family) retired some time after the war. Inez died some years after her husband in December, 1992, in Surrey. Anthony Paul's death was registered in the Worthing District in 2007.

Help Wanted

You will see from the notices with this copy of the Newsletter that the 2015 Annual General Meeting is coming up. This is the time when we seek additional help. Although we have reduced the size of the Committee we are still in need of members who can help with various duties. Your editor, for instance, is very conscious of the fact that he has done this job for a good number of years and would not be at all adverse to handing over to somebody with fresh ideas - and the same applies to various other officers. Please have a think about it, and if you are willing to lend a hand and thus prevent the OCA falling into obscurity, let our President or Secretary know, or just come along to the AGM.

Collyer's in 2014

Eric Austin has passed on the text of the toast to the OCA given by College representative Charlotte Dix at the 2014 Winter Reunion dinner. She acknowledged the history and importance of Collyer's and praises the staff and facilities, which had offered her the chance of working alongside PhD researchers from Southampton University looking at DNA technology. She noted the many other benefits of Collyer's beyond mere academic achievement; the whole community having helped her on her way to the next stage of her education and guided in all aspects of life. Part of this was going to the S7 college conference which aimed to share and improve experience and understanding of the college environment. Transferring from a small school to a College the size of Collyer's was initially frightening and amazing, but the whole experience was admirable thanks to the help received from teachers and fellow students.

The 'Old Lady'

A collecting box, made originally for the Fourth Centenary Fund, in the form of the 'Mercer's



Maiden' (aka the Old Lady) is customarily passed around at the OCA Winter Reunion. Her crown had seen better days, so Andrew Campbell had her repaired - successfully, as can be seen from the picture.

Reg Napper

We were sorry to learn of the death of Reg Napper on 25 April this year. Reg was 89, and attended Collyer's from 1936-43.

He had been an active member of the OCA and was well known to most of our older members, having been a stalwart of the Fourth Centenary Fund for many years.

Winter Reunion Dinner

Here we are once again, Winter Reunion time. Firstly please note the date - for many years this has been held on the third Saturday in November but this has been changed to the fourth for 2015. We have done this to make things easier for our excellent caterer, DH Caterers, who have a lot of other commitments on the third Saturday and it also gives us a further week to encourage you all to come. The venue, as always, is the College of Richard Collyer, Hurst Road, Horsham.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the first 'Hive' back in 1955 and also the 40th anniversary of the final intake of grammar school pupils in 1975, before Collyer's became a Sixth Form College. If you were in either of these groups we would be especially pleased to welcome you to this year's Dinner.

Last year we had a pretty good number of OCs and their guests, and it would be excellent if we could improve on this for 2015 - I think you can be assured of a good and entertaining evening.

The Annual General Meeting, as usual, takes place in the Memorial Hall at 4.00pm. Attendance is generally on the low side, which we quite understand, but if you can get along it only lasts around 45 minutes and it will be good to see you.

Dinner will be in the Duckering Hall - 6.30pm for 7.00pm start.

Our excellent and reasonably priced bar will be open in the Memorial Hall from 5.30pm and also after the Dinner so that you can continue to talk over old times.

The cost of the meal will be the same as the last two years at £28 per person.

The menu selected for this year is as below.

The Dinner is open to all Old Collyerians (staff, students and governors) whether members of the OCA or not plus partners and friends.

To ensure that you don't miss out and to ensure your place(s) please send a cheque to cover made out to the OCA to our Hon Treasurer, Stewart Mackman at 23, Bens Acre, HORSHAM, West Sussex, RH13 6LW. The relevant application form is included in the Newsletter.

We do NOT send out tickets now but when booking please ensure you let us have a contact address (e-mail or 'phone preferably) and your booking will be confirmed back to you. Also don't forget to advise us if you require the vegetarian alternative to the main course, as shown in the panel.

If you would prefer to pay by bank transfer our details are :-

Bank - NatWest, 47 Carfax, Horsham, RH12 1FD:
Sort code - 601117: Account no. - 62146556.

If you do use this method please confirm that you have done so to Stewart, our Treasurer, at: stewart.mackman@natwest.com.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, the seating and tables we use in the Duckering Hall are not particularly well matched to each other, and some might find it easier and more comfortable to bring a pad or thin cushion to raise the seat a little.

If you haven't been before, it's a chance to meet old friends and make new ones, to see our old school/college in its present form and to enjoy a good dinner in informal surroundings - although there are toasts and speeches they are kept short.

For further information or if you should have queries of any nature please contact Derek Sturt at sturt99@hotmail.com or telephone 01403 261756.

***Extra** - A previous President of the Association has kindly offered to provide wine at the Dinner at no cost to any members of the 1955 Hive who are present. If that's you please let us know when booking whether you would prefer red or white.*

Winter Reunion Dinner 2015 - Menu

Starter : Fanned Melon with Fruit Coulis.

Main Course : Chicken Breast wrapped in Parma Ham with a white wine and wild Mushroom sauce.

** The vegetarian option is Brie, Rocket & Redcurrant Filo Bundle.

Dessert : Trio of chocolate Desserts.

Cheese Board : Fresh Filter Coffee & Mints.

Sixty years since the first Hive

In the summer term of 1955, we in Form 3A were in relaxed mood, at least as far as school work was concerned. It was already a good summer, and we thought we had two years until our O-level exams at the end of the 5th year (O-levels were what are now called GCSEs) You may imagine our surprise, then, when we were told out of the blue that 16 of us from a form of about 30 would be separated off and made into a fast-track group which would take eight O-levels at the end of the fourth year, and, if successful, transfer straight into the sixth form for A-levels. This was to be called The Hive, and to my knowledge was a completely new experiment at Collyer's.

You might think that we who were chosen to act out this experiment would have been dismayed or apprehensive, but this was far from the case. In fact, the most noticeable characteristic of the first Hive was its relaxed cheerfulness (of course, as 14-year olds we weren't relaxed and cheerful about everything, but we were about our school work) The main reason for that was that we all knew from the start that it was an experiment, and if we did disastrously in the next year's exams we would simply rejoin the fifth form and have another year to get it right.

What then was the thinking behind this new venture? When I spoke recently on the phone to Vernon Davies, the Hive's form teacher, who is still with us at the age of 98, he said it was to get the brightest boys together (it was all boys then, of course) and push them faster with a view to getting as many as possible into Oxbridge. In retrospect, this does not surprise me, for I well remember then that getting boys into Oxbridge seemed to be by far the major objective of Collyer's at that time. Considering that, at the most, that meant about six pupils out of a year of about 90, I have often wondered since what was supposed to happen to the rest. This attitude was aggravated by the opinion of some of the teachers that universities other

than Oxbridge were simply not worth going to! Naturally those who thought like that had all been to Oxbridge themselves... It is indeed an astonishing statistic that of the 16 Hiveites, as we were sometimes called, fewer than half went on to any sort of higher education at all. Today, surely, everyone would.

I suspect there was another unspoken reason to create the Hive. Form 3A were a very lively bunch with a lot of energy, but at that age of 14 which was always the dread of teachers. It would make sense to divide us up into something more manageable. On the whole it worked; once in the Hive, we were certainly very lively, but not at all disruptive or subversive - except for Martin Rosen. Already in 3A he had learned in chemistry to make slow fuses. These he attached to banger fireworks, which were utterly forbidden in school, lit them at lunchtime in the toilets, and then waited for them to explode half an hour later, when we were all in class. It was a joy to see masters running from all sides to catch the culprit, who was of course serenely staring at the ceiling.

Martin moved onto bigger and more perilous things. Perilous, because he decided to dam the deep ditch which drained the school playing fields. This was under the formidable headship of P.A. Tharp, who for all his undoubted grandeur had certain bees in the bonnet. One was a near



The Hive, 1955 (picture provided by Peter Ticehurst)

obsession with the welfare of that ditch. Boys were absolutely forbidden to jump across it on pain of severe punishment if caught. Martin dammed it little by little each morning before assembly until it overflowed. He was never identified.

When we got to the Hive, Martin had one last spectacular. There was a huge roller for the cricket pitch, which seemed to need four men to push it, very slowly. I don't remember how he did it - maybe ropes and pulleys round the trees near the ditch, but into the ditch it went. That

morning, Dick Tidey was taking us for a sports lesson, and undertook to get the roller out. Using skills with knots and ropes no doubt learned in national service in the Navy, he got all 16 of us plus himself to pull. Alas, it scarcely budged. So he enlisted another entire class of about 30 fifth formers, added more ropes, and out it came to huge cheering. Truth to tell, I think Dick thoroughly enjoyed himself. Martin was again unidentified, and none of us ever gave the game away. Under the Tharp regime he might well have been expelled, but as we kept quiet you could say we all shared in his guilt. That was the end of subversion, I think

This story illustrates the togetherness of the Hive, which developed almost from day one. With only 16 of us in a small room near the library just about big enough to hold us, we all knew each other very well - there were no loners. It was a great demonstration of the benefits of small numbers.

Throughout the year we were high-spirited but kept under control with a light touch by Vernon Davies. We even had our own heraldic shield, (above) designed by the artistic (Tony) Evershed. It included visual punning references to all of us, plus Vernon Davies's initials. The inscription read 'ANDECOMBOGII COLENDI CAUSA' - for the sake of honouring Andecombogius. We were all studying for Latin O-level, and must have come across the Gaulish leader Andecombogius in Caesar's Gallic Wars. Because his name incorporated ' bog ' which was the then slang for the toilets, we thought this hilarious. Well, we were pretty young!

As the exams approached, the mood did not get any more sombre. Frequently four of us from Crawley spent weekday evenings playing two-a-side cricket at Three Bridges Recreation Ground,



using a metal waste-paper bin as a wicket, when we should have been revising. These games, though, were played with surprising intensity. Tim Cattell and myself were also spotted playing chess on the school field in times meant for revision. On the day of our first exam - I think it was art - the invigilator Mr Kenyon (French master) was visibly scandalised by our less than reverential entry into the room. He had clearly been used to a terrified and tense silence. Well most of us passed easily, and there were

few failures in the eight exams. Most of us went straight on the sixth form, which was not very big at that time, but rather enlivened by our youthful, if not immature, numbers.

Two years later after A-levels four of us did get to Oxbridge -three from Crawley, by the way. Tricky and Ticehurst broke the mould and went to a new university. Everybody had successful careers, and indeed we had two professors. But the best memories remain the fun and camaraderie. Of the 15 still alive, 11 are still in touch with the school or each other and indeed with Mr Davies. In some ways we were the end of one era as it was to be the last year of P.A. Tharp' s imposing 30-year headship and the old certainties. But in 1955 the world was indeed changing, and that year Rock and Roll appeared and the beginning of the youth culture we still have now. In a sense the Hiveites were some of Collyer's first Rockers.

Lawrence Smith (aka Smith2, Lofty or Little Jim)

Editor's note: *The Hive was still in existence when I entered Collyer's some five years later, but before our year was due to undergo the selection process we were told that the Hive was being discontinued. This must have been around the 1964-65, (or maybe the previous) academic year. The reason we were given was that 'our intake wasn't intelligent enough' - but that probably owed more to certain masters' warped sense of humour than to fact. It was a bit of a surprise, because the elitist nature of the Hive must have been in line with the Coulson (successor to Tharp) ethos - he certainly set great score by exam results and Oxbridge entries.*

And does anybody have information about any of the 'missing Hiveites', Tony Evershed, Colin Pugh, Chris Rees, Gwyn Hinvest and Martin Rosen?

Summer Reunion 2015

SUNDAY 28 JUNE - The weather on that particular Sunday was not of the best, being a little dull with some light rain but this didn't deter 23 OCs and their partners joining up at Denbies Winery at Dorking for a very enjoyable few hours in each other's company. As our time there was spent under cover the weather was not relevant.

Thank you for those of you who did come, some from quite a distance, and from the communications that I received you all had an excellent time.

Initially we had an hour or so for a natter in the specially reserved area in the Conservatory Restaurant then most moved on to the 60 minute tour of the winery (said to be Britain's biggest), which was very informative and entertaining,

especially the last part tasting three of Denbies' excellent wines.

This was followed by an excellent lunch continued by even more nattering until around 3pm (which was not too difficult for those present) and a chance to look around the shop and gallery and also the antiques fair which was on.

We haven't yet finally decided the venue and date for the 2016 reunion, but should have some ideas sorted by the time this Newsletter goes to print. One excellent venue favoured by our incoming President is mentioned below. If you have any other thoughts on a suitable and not too expensive venue, for 2016 or any future summer reunion, do please let me know and it will be down to our President for the year to make the decision.

Derek Sturt



Denbies Wine Estate

Summer Reunion 2016

Incoming president Eric Austin has suggested a visit to the Brooklands Museum and, optionally, the adjacent Mercedes Benz World. They are near Weybridge, which may seem at first sight to be a bit far from Horsham but it is an easy journey, and no further than Wisley, where a very good summer meeting was held not so long ago.

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If you already get the newsletter this way and change your email address then please also let us know. Elsewhere in this issue members will find a list of 'bounced' email addresses - some of these may still be valid but your email program or provider is rejecting our mailings. So please make sure that 'ocanewsletter@btinternet.com' is included in your safe senders list.

Membership

Because of data protection considerations, details of individual members are included only in the full version of this newsletter, which is sent to subscribers.

Membership queries to:

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mandscollins@talktalk.net

Richard Collyer Masonic Lodge and Chapter

The Richard Collyer Masonic Lodge is almost as old as the OCA, having been formed in 1927, while the Chapter is a mere junior having been formed in 1958. Both are very active organisations and meet regularly at Horsham Masonic Hall. The Lodge members would be delighted to hear from any old Collyerians who would like further details or who might be interested in joining.

Full details may be obtained from:

Peter R Ticehurst, Flat 32, Bowes Close, Horsham RH13 5SZ.